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Hoover Calls Bugging Valuable in Crime Fight

Associated Press

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover said yesterday that conviction of syndicate gangsters has increased and much credit for the rise is due to evidence gleaned from electronic surveillance devices.

"These devices have been increasingly valuable in penetrating these complex, tightly-knit conspiracies involving intricate security precautions, and most of the 1,200 arrests under the Organized Crime Control Act were made possible by them," Hoover said.

He said that convictions in the field of organized crime rose from 468 in 1970 to more than 650 in 1971 and added "much of the credit for these gains should go to court-approved electronic surveillance devices provided for in recent legislation."

Hoover made his remarks in the FBI's year-end report on its activities.

Hoover said cases against some 2,200 other gambling and racketeering figures, including seven national syndicate leaders and a number of their top lieutenants, were in various stages of prosecution.

In other cases, Hoover said the Weatherman organization, while continuing to engage in acts of extreme violence, at present appears to have narrowed down to a hard-core membership.

He said two of the leading forces in the antiwar movement in the United States were infiltrated or dominated by the Communist Party. These were identified in the FBI report as the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice and the National Peace Action Coalition.

On other matters, the report said:

- Stock and bond thefts continued during 1971 at a high level with one theft of blank stock certificates in Chicago having a potential of \$30 million.

- A record total of more than 35,000 fugitives were located during the calendar year with convictions in FBI cases reaching almost 14,000.

- Fines, saving and recoveries resulting from FBI investigations will reach an estimated \$510 million for the year, representing a return of \$1.61 for every dollar appropriated for FBI investigation.